



7373 West Saginaw Highway, Box 30960, Lansing, Michigan 48909-8460
Phone (517) 323-7000

September 23, 2009

To: Senate Agriculture Committee Members

From: Tonia Ritter, Manager, State Governmental Affairs

Re: HB 5127 (S-2)

Michigan Farm Bureau supports the pork and poultry industries compromise language as offered in the S-2 substitute for H.B. 5127.

Michigan Pork and Poultry Association and Michigan Allied Poultry expressed to Farm Bureau that in light of the unknown fate of an HSUS-driven ballot initiative, they feel the substitute legislation is in the best interest of their members, and asked for Farm Bureau's support.

After long and thoughtful consideration, the MFB Board of Directors decided to honor the pork and poultry industries' request and support their legislative effort. The decision to support the pork and poultry industries' compromise legislation was reached, in part, based on the following:

- Farm Bureau is a general farm organization and its membership includes pork and poultry farmers.
- MFB member-developed policy strongly opposes the use of ballot initiatives as a way to regulate modern livestock production and management practices. The compromise legislation appears to diffuse this threat, at least in the near future, because in negotiating the legislation, HSUS has said it "will not pursue a Michigan farm animal confinement-related ballot measure prior to the effective date of the law."

At the same time, on behalf of our 47,000 member farm families, Michigan Farm Bureau urges the Michigan Legislature to advance a modified version of H.B. 5128 or S.B. 654 that would establish a Michigan Livestock Animal Care Standards Board with oversight through the Michigan Department of Agriculture. We look forward to working with the Legislature to advance meaningful legislation that provides a well thought out framework for science-based livestock animal care in this state.